

SURVEYS

Surveys (or Preliminary Damage Assessments - PDA's) represent the very beginning of the disaster recovery process and as such, are critical to disaster declarations.

The purpose of the preliminary damage assessment is to methodically gather information relating to the cause, severity, and extent of damage resulting from a disaster occurrence. In all cases, surveys begin with a request from the Governor of the State. It is performed as soon as practically possible after the occurrence and serves two critical purposes. First, the information that is gathered provides the information necessary to respond to the State's request for disaster aide. Second, if declared, it provides management with vital pre-planning information necessary to effectively meet the needs of those impacted by the disaster.

ICON KEY



Noting the pertinent data.



Observations and notes.

Depending on the magnitude of the disaster, the State may request assistance from the President (FEMA) or the SBA Administrator (Agency).

During Presidential surveys, FEMA is always the lead agency and SBA personnel serve as technical assistants. The Loss Verifier must understand that they are part of the FEMA preliminary damage assessment team and it is their role to assist FEMA in the collection of data for a possible Presidential declaration while gathering pertinent data for SBA purposes.

During a SBA Administrative/Agency request, SBA serves as the lead Federal Agency. In this case, the AAD/LV remains in contact with the State representatives coordinating the survey and discusses details regarding logistics of where and when SBA representatives are to meet with State and local officials in the affected area.

Prior to departing to a disaster stricken area for survey duty the Loss Verifier should pre-plan. This pre-planning should include assembling information that contains contacts (FEMA, American Red Cross, State Emergency Officials, etc.), maps of the impacted area, NFIP Community Status book printout for affected State, travel information and meeting arrangements, as well as SBA survey reference material.

At the disaster area site, the Loss Verifier or Survey Team Leader will meet State and/or local representatives and perhaps FEMA personnel if the request is for a Presidential declaration.

AGENCY DECLARATIONS

Regardless of the type of the PDA (FEMA or SBA), the criteria used by the SBA to determine its recommendation for an Agency declaration remains the same.

The criteria as set forth in 13 CFR; § 123.3 (2)(i):

“In any county or other smaller political subdivision of a State or U.S. possession, at least 25 homes or 25 businesses, or combination of at least 25 homes, businesses, or other eligible institutions, each sustain uninsured losses of 40 percent or more of the estimated fair replacement value or pre-disaster fair market value of the damaged property, whichever is lower;”

These criteria are essential to SBA for potential Agency declarations.

The SBA makes a physical disaster declaration based on the occurrence of at least a minimum amount of physical damage to buildings, machinery, equipment, inventory, homes and other property. Such damage must meet certain tests or criteria. Three specific formulas have been developed to assist the Loss Verifier while performing a preliminary disaster survey to determine if the damage meets those tests.

During the preliminary disaster survey the Loss Verifier must apply one of three specific formulas that have been developed to determine if the SBA criteria is being satisfied for each damaged property observed. The Loss Verifier should become familiar with the use of these formulas and how they are applied. Depending on the type of damage observed at each site, any one of the following formulas may be used to determine if the 40 percent uninsured loss criteria has been satisfied.

The Loss Verifier should be aware of the following policies when applying these formulas:

- The standard practice is to consider all damaged residential properties without regard to eligibility issues unless the property is **obviously** neither a primary residence nor rental property.

- A damaged business property is site specific and is considered independently from other locations owned by the same business.

ONE

Estimated Cost to Replace or Repair Damaged Personal Property (excluding personal autos) – insurance recovery

Total Personal Property, excluding personal autos (Replacement Value or Pre-disaster FMV, whichever is lower)

Personal property is the non-real property of a homeowner, tenant, or business. In the case of a homeowner or tenant this would include all personal property (excluding vehicles). For a business or an eligible institution personal property would include inventory, machinery/equipment, and furniture/fixtures/supplies.

When estimating the **“Damaged Personal Property”** amount the Loss Verifier should base their calculations on either the estimated cost to repair or replace the damaged non-real property.

“Total Personal Property” would include the total replacement value or pre-disaster fair market value, which ever is lower, of all non-real property (excluding vehicles for homeowners and tenants).

TWO

Estimated Cost to Repair Damaged Land + Improvements **to** the Land – insurance recovery

Total Land + Improvements **to** Land (Replacement Value or Pre-disaster FMV, whichever is lower)

This formula only considers damage to the land and improvements to the land of a homeowner, business, or eligible institution. The estimated damage amounts for **“Damaged Land + Improvements to the Land”** should be based on the estimated cost to repair or replace the damaged items and bring the real property to a pre-disaster condition.

THREE

Estimated Cost to Repair or Replace Damaged Improvements **on** the Land (buildings)
– insurance recovery






Total Improvements **on** the Land (buildings) (Replacement Value or Pre-disaster FMV, whichever is lower)

This formula only considers damage to the improvements on the land (buildings) of a homeowner, business, or eligible institution. The estimated damage amounts for the **“Damaged Improvements on the Land”** should be based on the estimated cost to repair or replace the damaged buildings and bring the real property to a pre-disaster condition.

PDA DATA COLLECTION

Ideally the State should provide a list of damaged properties to be viewed during the survey. If a list is not provided, the Loss Verifier should request to see the areas that have been reported to have suffered the worst damages or ask to speak with local officials or townspeople that have voiced concerns. Red Cross information is also very helpful in identifying damaged areas.

During the PDA the Loss Verifier must exercise care in noting the following pertinent data regarding damaged property with at least 40 percent damage:

-  The physical address of the property.
-  Type of property (home, business, & other).
-  Estimated fair replacement value or pre-disaster fair market value.
-  Estimated dollar amount of loss.
-  The dollar amount of insurance for the type of damage suffered.







SURVEYS

This data will be compiled for use by the Area Director in determining if a declaration is recommended.

The Loss Verifier must maintain close contact with the Survey Team Leader who communicates closely with the AAD/LV regarding the observations and details of the PDA. Team members should discuss observations and generally agree upon the extent of losses; however always keep in mind that final determinations are not made at the field level. Discussion about any PDA details should be confined to only those officials involved in the survey. You should use caution during your discussions to assure that details of the survey are not made public prior to the release of the final report. **Do not seek out the media during a survey.** Any media inquiries should be referred to FEMA or the Area Office Public Information Officer (PIO). A typical response, if pressured by the media, would be; *"I am one of several field inspectors gathering data which will be forwarded to the Area Office to be evaluated, a report will then be prepared and sent to Washington where the decision will be made as to what types of Federal assistance is needed"*.

Upon completion of the physical inspection, the survey data must be compiled on a Disaster Survey Worksheet. See the sample below.

This worksheet must contain specific damage information as well as:

-  Names, titles and phone numbers of all survey personnel.
-  Special circumstances which are characteristic of the disaster - i.e.; scope of damages, major employer affected, etc.
-  Insurance recovery information (percentage of properties insured against disaster peril suffered).
-  Anticipated economic impact on area effected.
-  Contacts for local space or logistics requirements.
-  Contiguous Counties.

U. S. SMALL BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION							
Damage Assessment Report							
Disaster Area Office							
State			Name of Governor or Authorized Representative			Date of Request	
Type and Cause of Disaster				Date(s) of occurrence		Date(s) of Survey	
				1			
County or Political Subdivision Surveyed				SBA Survey Team Member(s)			
DAMAGE SUMMARY							
Estimated Properties Affected					Major Damage Qualifying for SBA Purposes		
	Homes		Businesses			Number	\$ Amount
	Number	\$ Amount	Number	\$ Amount	Homes		
Majors		2			Business	3	
Minors					Non-Profit		
TOTALS					TOTALS		
Comments							
Standard comments should address the following information:							
Participants; Name, Title, Agency, Telephone #, etc.							
Description of damages; severity, magnitude, accessibility, type of damage i.e., renters, mobile homes, retail stores seasonal businesses, heavy secondary home loss etc.							
Identify source(s) of information used to estimate number of properties affected.							
Site-specifics of community i.e. impact on community, size unusual conditions, historical buildings, heavy agriculture loss, major employers etc.							
Status of NFIP participating, suspended etc.							
4							
Approximate amount of insurance coverage							
Contiguous counties							
Area Office Recommendation				<input type="checkbox"/> Approve <input type="checkbox"/> Disapprove			
				5			
Area Director Signature _____				Date _____			

ITEM 1 General Information

This data provides management with general reference information that may be required to respond to the State's request for disaster aide.

ITEM 2 Estimated Properties Affected

Estimated properties affected are the total number of damaged properties based on **all** information available. This would include data observed during the survey along with information collected from any other knowledgeable source. *i.e.*, conversations with Office of Emergency Management, Red Cross, State & Local officials, media information, etc.

This data should reflect the **total** estimated number of properties damaged and the **total** dollar value of damages without regard to insurance or any other recoveries.

ITEM 3 Major Damage Qualifying for SBA Purposes

This data reflects the detailed list of damaged properties that qualify as major damage for SBA purposes and as stated specifically on the back of Form 987.

This data should reflect the number of properties listed on the back of Form 987 and the total dollar value of uninsured losses.

In order to qualify for SBA purposes, the Loss Verifier should:

1. Use any one of the three formulas to determine the percentage of loss.
2. The Loss Verifier should visit the damaged site to physically confirm the loss.
3. The Loss Verifier should discuss the specifics/details of the damaged property with a knowledgeable source.

ITEM 4 Comments

The comments included should address the information as listed on the sample Form 987.

ITEM 5 Area Office Recommendations

Following a review of the information compiled by the Loss Verification department, the Area Director will use this section to recommend either approval or decline of the State's request.